BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 06543 502 4
GOVDOC
BRA
5195
DRAFT

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

# REPLACEMENT OF THE AGASSIZ/OLD AGASSIZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:

A Report by the Staff
of the
Boston Redevelopment Authority
May 1965

R21
BRA3

Property of
BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Library

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

"BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY"

I. Transmittal Letter

II. Summary of Findings

III. The Existing Schools

IV. Size of the Replacement School

V. ~~Land Area Requirements - Recommended Site~~ Recommended Development Program.

Table: Property Data

Maps: ~~(1) Proposed Agassiz Replacement School Site~~

(2) Acquisition Parcels

(3) Sketch of Site Plan

Single Space.

Recommended Development Program.

Land area requirements
Recommended site
Development costs
Timing

single space

5/25/65

May 23, 1967
R21
B8A 3
cop. 2

## II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ~~AND RECOMMENDATION~~

1. The existing Agassiz and Old Agassiz elementary schools should be replaced with a new school which has a capacity of 550 pupils.

2. The best location for a new school is on a 1.2 acre site adjacent to the 4.2 acre Murphy Playground, and between the playground and Center Street.

3. The cost of acquiring and clearing the site is estimated to be $200,000 and will require the relocation of 33 families and ten small retail businesses.

## III. THE EXISTING SCHOOLS

The Agassiz, built in 1893, and the adjacent Old Agassiz, built in 1849, are proposed for replacement by a single new school. The existing buildings are obsolete for continued educational use, are of non-fireproof construction and on an inadequate site of only one acre.

In the fall of 1964 the two schools had a combined enrollment of 521 with pupils in Grades K through 6.

AGASSIZ/OLD AGASSIZ: 1964-65 SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS BY GRADE

| K | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 122 | 75 | 50 | 54 | 68 | 68 | 66 | 521 |

The two schools combined have 13 general purpose classrooms, two kindergarten rooms, a woodworking shop, a music room, a sewing room, a remedial reading room, a television room, and an auditorium. The BRA estimates the capacity of the two schools to be 490 students

Population declined slightly between 1950 and 1960, then increased between 1960 and 1965.

Population of Jamaica Plain

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1950 | 44,642 | U. S. Census |
| 1960 | 41,606 | U. S. Census |
| 1965 | 42,430 | State Census |

Although there has been little change in total population, public school enrollments have shown some increase in recent years in the lower grades. K-6 enrollments have increased by approximately 660 between 1955 and 1965. The trend is expected to continue into 1970 with K-6 enrollments increasing from 3,407 in 1965 to approximately 3,800 in 1970.

Jamaica Plain Public School Enrollments

| | 1955-56 | 1959-60 | 1964-65 |
|---|---|---|---|
| K-6 | 2,749 | 2,932 | 3,407 |
| 7-9 | 1,221 | 1,042 | 1,089 |
| | 3,971 | 3,974 | 4,496 |

The most important factors determining the size of needed new school facilities in this area are in the control of the School Department and School Committee. For instance, policies of class size and pupil-teacher ratios will determine the number of classroom spaces needed for a given number of pupils and therefore possibly the size of the building in terms of square feet.

Past recommendations by the BRA for the area west of the New Haven Railroad have been to build, in addition to the Agassiz/Old Agassiz replacement, a 550-pupil replacement for the Bowditch (by 1975) and a new 350-pupil school to handle the projected growth in school enrollments and to compensate for the loss of the Wyman School, recommended for abandonment before 1975. These were based on the assumption that the K-5 organization would be adopted. The following recommendations are also based upon that assumption. The K-5 organization was adopted by the School Committee on June 15.

Studies by the BRA staff show there are few potential sites in the proper location that could be developed at reasonable cost. Therefore, while the need for additional classroom space still exists, the current recommendation is to build two schools instead of three and to increase their capacities each sufficiently to handle the difference.

If this recommendation is followed, it means the construction of a school of somewhat larger capacity than the existing combined Agassiz/ Old Agassiz, although it is conceivable this might be done in two stages. Two classrooms per grade could be constructed as the first stage and one classroom per grade constructed as a second stage. Thus, the first stage would provide for a capacity of at least 550 pupils and the second stage for an additional 150 to 200 pupils.

Additional special classrooms for language, music, etc., would also be required depending on more detailed programming by the School Department.

## RECOMMENDED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

### Land Area Requirements

A two-story school of 550 capacity exclusive of playground area requires approximately one acre. An additional minimum of two acres is recommended for playground use.

### Recommended Site

A search for possible sites in the general vicinity of the existing Agassiz/Old Agassiz School shows only one can be recommended, if it is to also include adequate outdoor recreation space. This is a 1.2 site on Centre Street adjacent to the 4.2 acre Murphy Playground now occupied by 15 buildings containing 33 dwelling units and 10 businesses. (The playground would remain in Park Department ownership.)

By building the school adjacent to an existing playground, clearance and site acquisition costs are kept to a minimum and more intensive school and community use can be made of the playground.

A sketch of the possible building layout with room for expansion is shown on map (1).

### Development Costs

The City's Capital Improvement Program has budgeted the cost of elementary school construction at approximately $2,000 per pupil. This includes furnishings and all costs related to the design and construction of the building but does not include land acquisition. Thus, the cost of constructing a 550 capacity school is estimated at $1,100,000. This estimate will have to be revised upwards as building costs continue to climb. (During the past few years this has averaged 2½ to 3% per year.)

The cost of site clearance and acquisition and clearance is estimated to be $200,000. If, however, the site were purchased from the BRA as part of a renewal program, then the cost to the School Department is estimated at $6,000. This is based on a disposition price similar to that used for a school site in the Washington Park Urban Renewal Project.

---

Estimated Total Cost

---

| | With Renewal | Without Renewal |
|---|---|---|
| Site | 6,000 | 200,000 |
| Building | 1,100,000 | 1,100,000 |
| Total | $1,106,000 | $1,300,000 |

Timing

A minimum time schedule, from agreement to build the school until completion of construction is estimated to be 23 months.

---

Minimum Timetable

---

| | Months |
|---|---|
| Site Acquisition* | 0 |
| Program | 1 1/2 |
| Preliminary Plans & Working Drawings | 4 |
| Advertising & Bidding | 1 1/2 |
| Construction | 16 |
| Total Time | 23 Months |

*Site acquisition to go on simultaneously with preparation of program and preliminary plans.

The BRA is considering urban renewal activity for Jamaica Plain which would make this site available at lower cost and on a comparable time schedule.

## IV. SIZE OF A REPLACEMENT SCHOOL

A review of past population trends for Jamaica Plain as a whole shows this area to be one of the most stable in the City of Boston. (Jamaica Plain, as defined in this report, includes the land areas between the Jamaicaway and Franklin Park, and from Heath Street to the Arborway).

Population declined slightly between 1950 and 1960, then increased between 1960 and 1965.

POPULATION OF JAMAICA PLAIN - lower core

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1950 | 44,642 | U. S. Census |
| 1960 | 41,606 | U. S. Census |
| 1965 | 42,430 | State Census |

Although there has been little change in total population, public school enrollments have shown some increase in recent years in the lower grades. K-6 enrollments have increased by approximately 660 between 1955 and 1965. The trend is expected to continue into 1970 with K-6 enrollments increasing from 3,407 in 1965 to approximately 3,800 in 1970.

JAMAICA PLAIN PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS - lower core

| | 1955-56 | 1959-60 | 1964-65 |
|---|---|---|---|
| K-6 | 2,749 | 2,932 | 3,407 |
| 7-9 | 1,221 | 1,042 | 1,089 |
| | 3,971 | 3,974 | 4,496 |

The most important factors determining the size of needed new school facilities in this area are in the control of the School Department and School Committee. For instance, policies of class size and pupil-teacher ratios will determine the number of classroom spaces needed for a given number of pupils and therefore possibly the size of the building in terms of square feet.

## IV. SIZE OF A REPLACEMENT SCHOOL (Cont'd)

This consideration is, however, relatively minor compared to that of grade organization. Determination by any method of projection of the necessary number of pupils to be housed depends upon the number of grades to be housed. The difference of approximately 15% between a K-6 and a K-5 organization in any area the size of Jamaica Plain may determine the need for an entire additional school.

It may be possible to state that these problems of grade organization need not matter in the choice of school sites because if necessary the size of the school building can be increased later to hold the added number.

However, this is not good practice in planning. Sites should be chosen with a long-term view of the numbers of pupils they are to serve. It should be obvious that a site which is perfectly adequate and acceptable for a school of 500 may well be, and usually is, wholly inadequate and substandard for a school of 800 It is seldom possible in a city to find sites which are adaptable to such changes. And it is not always defensible to recommend acquisition of expensive property involving relocation of people and businesses in excess of what is actually adequate for the smaller school then being built if no firm determination can be made that the added size will in fact be needed in the future.

Past recommendations by the BRA for the area west of the New Haven Railroad have been to build, in addition to the Agassiz/Old Agassiz replacement, a 550 pupil replacement for the Bowditch (by 1975) and a new 350 pupil school to handle the projected growth in school enrollments and to compensate for the loss of the Wyman School, recommended for abandonment before 1975. These were based on the assumption that the K-5 organization would be adopted. The following recommendations are also based upon that assumption.

Studies by the BRA Staff show there are few potential sites in the proper location that could be developed at reasonable cost. Therefore, while the need for additional classroom space still exists, the current recommendation is to build two schools instead of three and to increase their capacities each sufficiently to handle the difference.

If this recommendation is followed, it means the construction of a school of somewhat larger capacity than the existing combined

IV. SIZE OF A REPLACEMENT SCHOOL (Cont'd)

Agassiz/Old Agassiz, although it is conceivable this might be done in two stages. Two classrooms per grade could be constructed as the first stage and one classroom per grade constructed as a second stage. Thus, the first stage would provide for a capacity of at least 550 pupils and the second stage for an additional 150 to 200 pupils. ~~The choice of a site has been based in part upon the requirements for a school of this large size.~~

#Additional special classrooms ~~for~~ for language, music, etc. would also be required depending on ~~the~~ ~~special program~~ more detailed programming by the School ~~Department~~.

Continued on the next page

Recommended Development Program

V. ~~LAND AREA REQUIREMENTS - RECOMMENDED SITE~~

Land area requirements

A two story school of 350 capacity exclusive of playground area requires approximately one acre. An additional ~~one and one half~~ two acres is recommended for playground use.

Recommended site

A search for possible sites in the general vicinity of the existing Agassiz/Old Agassiz School shows only one can be recommended, if it is to also include adequate outdoor recreation space. This is a 1.2 site on Centre Street adjacent to the 4.2 acre Murphy Playground. ~~(~~The playground would remain in Park Department ownership). ~~A sketch of the possible building layout with room for expansion to 700 is shown on Map (1).~~

~~The site is now occupied by 15 buildings containing 33 dwelling units and 10 businesses. The cost of acquisition and site clearance will be approximately $200,000.~~

~~The proposed site and property ownership are shown on the attached maps (1) and (2) and the table of property data.~~ # By building the school adjacent to an existing playground, clearance and site acquisition costs are kept to a minimum and more intensive school and community use can be made of the playground. ~~)~~

now occupied by 15 buildings containing 33 dwelling units and 10 businesses

# A sketch of the possible building layout with room for expansion is shown on map (1)

Continued on page 2a

~~AGASSIZ ADDENDUM DRAFT~~

Development Costs

The City's Capital Improvement Program has budgeted the cost of elementary school construction at approximately $2,000 per pupil. This includes furnishings and all costs related to the design and construction of the building but does not include land acquisition. Thus, the cost of constructing a 550 capacity school is estimated at $1,100,000.

This estimate will have to be revised upwards as building costs continue to climb. (During the past few years this has averaged 2-1/2 to 3% per year).

The cost of site clearance and acquisition and clearance is estimated to be $200,000. If, however, the site were purchased from the BRA as part of a renewal program, then the cost to the School Department is estimated at $6,000. This is based on a disposition price similar to that used for a school site in the Washington Park Urban Renewal Project.

---

ESTIMATED TOTAL COST - Low Cost

---

| | With Renewal | Without Renewal |
|---|---|---|
| Site | 6,000 | 200,000 |
| Building | 1,100,000 | 1,100,000 |
| Total | $1,106,000 | $1,300,000 |

# PROPERTY DATA
## AGASSIZ REPLACEMENT SCHOOL SITE

| Parcel No. | Address | Owner | Area (S.F.) | Number D.U.'s | No. of Businesses | Assessed Value | Est. Mkt. Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 9-11 Carolina Ave. | Paul T. Duffy | 5672 | 2 | -- | $ 5,500 | $ 11,000 |
| 2 | 7 Carolina Ave. | Andrew Kechijian | 2767 | 3 | -- | 6,500 | 13,000 |
| 3 | 60-66 South St. | Andrew Kechijian | 4022 | -- | 4 | 10,000 | 12,000 |
| 4 | 58½ South St. | Andrew Kechijian | 3066 | -- | 2 | 7,000 | 8,500 |
| 5 | 70-72 South St. | Joseph McCall | 4350 | 2 | -- | 6,400 | 13,000 |
| 6 | 70R South St. | Thomas Kelley | 2204 | 2 | -- | 4,100 | 7,000 |
| 7 | 76 South St. | Hannah King | 3960 | 3 | -- | 6,500 | 13,000 |
| 8 | 74 South St. | Anthony Pisa | 3016 | 3 | -- | 6,000 | 9,500 |
| 9 | 78-80 South St. | Mary Lydon | 8862 | 6 | 2 | 14,000 | 17,000 |
| 10 | 82-84 South St. | Hannah King | 4750 | 4 | 1 + 1 Vac. | 7,900 | 10,000 |
| 11 | 86-90 South St. | P. J. Higgins, Jr | 4439 | 2 | 1 | 8,400 | 12,000 |
| 12 | 8 Child St. | Mary Twohig | 2850 | 3 | -- | 4,000 | 10,000 |
| 13 | 10 Child St. | James Tirrell | 2850 | 3 | -- | 4,000 | 10,000 |
| | TOTALS | | 52,808 | 33 | 10 | 90,300 | 146,000 |
| | | | | | + 1 Vac | +20% | *30,000 |
| | | | | | | | 176,000 |
| | | | | | Demolition | | 24,000 |
| | | | | | Total Estimated Cost | | $200,000 |

*20% Assemblage & Contingency Factor

R21 2 copies
BRA3 Boston Redevelopment Authority.
Replacement of the Agassiz/Old Agassiz elementary Schools.1965
DATE ISSUED TO